

- (b) a fragment of the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:4; or
- (c) a polypeptide encoded by a nucleic acid sequence that is at least 75% identical to SEQ ID NO:3;

wherein said polypeptides and fragments of (ii) (a), (b) and (c) bind the extracellular domain of SEQ ID NO:2; and

- (iii) a test compound; and

- b. assaying for the level of interaction of the protein of (i) and the protein of (ii);

such that if the level obtained in step (b) differs from that obtained in the absence of the test compound, a test compound that affects the interaction of the protein of (i) and the protein of (ii) is identified.

29. (Amended) A method of screening a test compound comprising the steps of:

- a. forming a composition comprising

- (i) a protein selected from the group consisting of:

- (a) the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:2; and

- (b) a fragment of the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:2; wherein said fragment binds the extracellular domain of SEQ ID NO:4;

- (ii) the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:4; and

- (iii) a test compound; and

- b. assaying for the level of interaction of the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:2 or a fragment of the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:2 and the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:4;

such that if the level obtained in step (b) differs from that obtained in the absence of the test compound, a test compound that affects the interaction of the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:2 or a fragment of the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:2 and the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:4 is identified.

30. (Amended) A method of screening a test compound comprising the steps of:

- a. forming a composition comprising

- (i) the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:2;

- (ii) TACI-L protein selected from the group consisting of:

- (a) the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:4; and

- (b) a fragment of the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:4; wherein said fragment binds the extracellular domain of SEQ ID NO:2; and

- (iii) a test compound; and

- b. assaying for the level of interaction of the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:2 and the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:4 or a fragment of the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:4;

such that if the level obtained in step (b) differs from that obtained in the absence of the test compound, a test compound that affects the interaction of the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:2 and the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:4 or a fragment of the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:4 is identified.

31. (Amended) A method of screening a test compound comprising the steps of:

- a. forming a composition comprising
- (i) a fragment of the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:2, wherein said fragment binds the extracellular domain of SEQ ID NO:4;
 - (ii) a fragment of the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:4, wherein said fragment binds the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:2; and
 - (iii) a test compound; and
- b. assaying for the level of interaction of a fragment of the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:2 and a fragment of the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:4;

such that if the level obtained in step (b) differs from that obtained in the absence of the test compound, a test compound that affects the interaction of a fragment of the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:2, and a fragment of the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:4 is identified.

32. (Amended) A method of screening a test compound comprising the steps of:

- a. forming a composition comprising
- (i) the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:2;
 - (ii) the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:4; and
 - (iii) a test compound; and
- b. assaying for the level of interaction of the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:2 and the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:4 ;

such that if the level obtained in step (b) differs from that obtained in the absence of the test compound, a test compound that affects the interaction of the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:2 and the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:4 is identified.

REMARKS

This Amendment and Reply is being filed in response to the Final Office Action having a mailing date of July 16, 2001. Claims 15-34 are currently pending in the application with claims 15, 29, 30, 31 and 32 being in independent form. In light of the